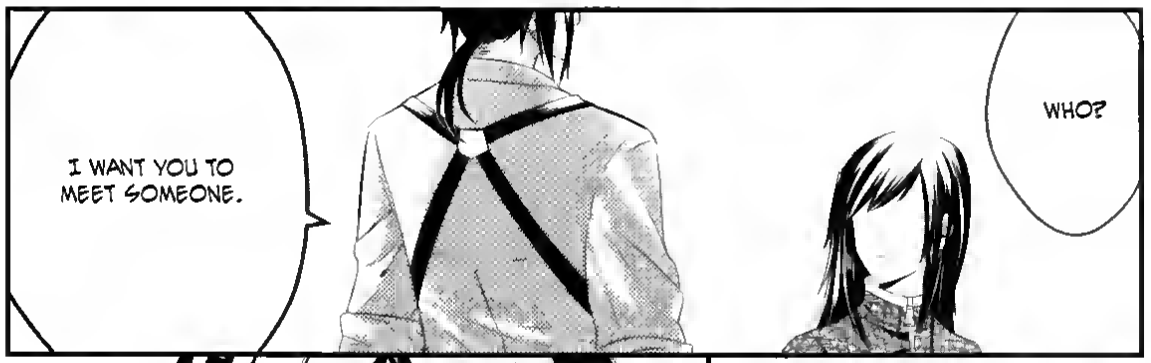
BLACK ink
WRITTEN BY
NALD TABUZO
DRIFT
1
ILLUSTRATED BY
GODLEY MALABANAN

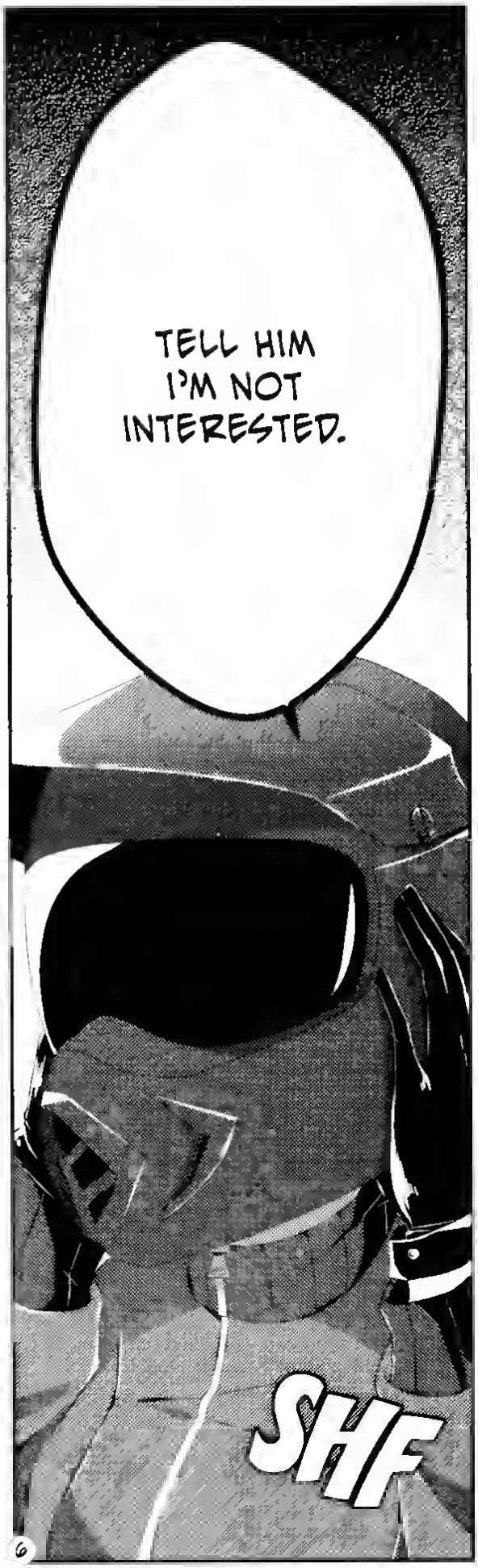
MY NAME'S AIRA HERNANDEZ, 23 YEARS OLD.
I'M A SPECIAL AGENT FOR AN ANGENCY CALLED DAGGER EYES — A SECURITY AND DETECTIVE AGENCY.
IT'S LEGIT BUT THERE'S NO PUBLIC RECORDS ABOUT US. THAT'S WHY ALL MY FRIENDS ARE CLUELESS ABOUT MY REAL JOB. THEY THINK I'M A REAL STATE AGENT.
OF COURSE, ALL OF THOSE EMPLOYED IN DAGGER EYES ARE ALSO CONFIDENTIAL.

VSH
HHH
THE ONE IN-CHARGE OF THE AGENCY IS DADRIAN 'DAD' VICENTE, AN EX-MILITARY MAN.
HFF

ZIP
I SOMEHOW GET NERVOUS WHEN YOU SMILE LIKE THAT.

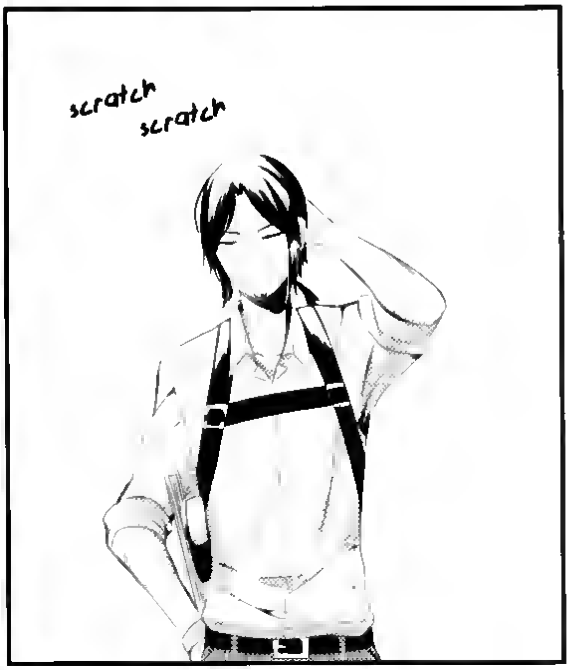

I WANT YOU TO MEET SOMEONE.
WHO?

GRIN
ACTUALLY, HE'S INTERESTED IN YOU.
TRR

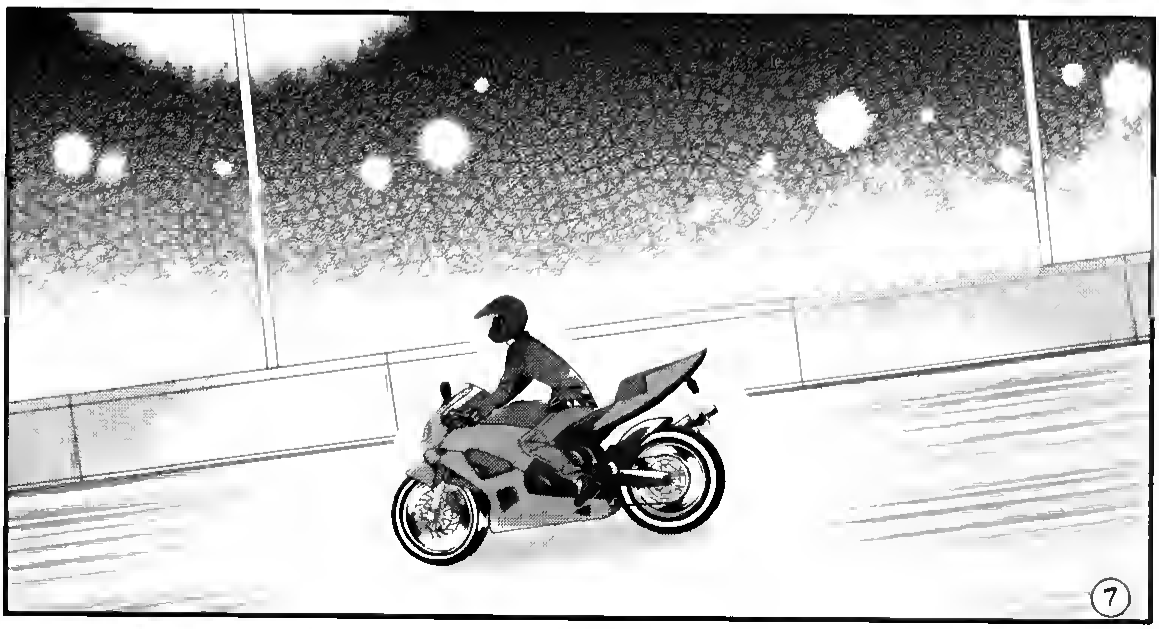

TELL HIM I'M NOT INTERESTED.
SHF

BUT I ALREADY TO—
VRRR

VRRR


scratch
scratch

VRRR



CLACK
?
SIN News
THIS IS LORY...
MY BOARDMATE.
A CAR SALES AGENT.

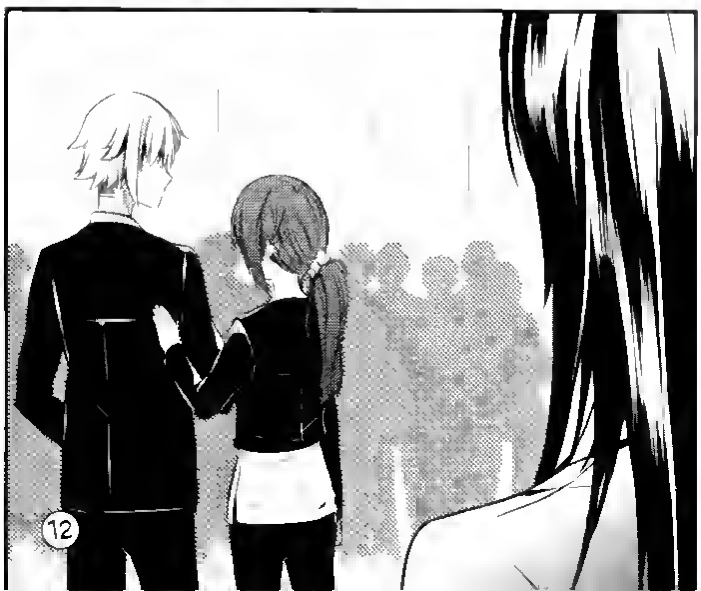
WHY ARE YOU STILL AWAKE?
I'M WAITING FOR SOME NEWS ABOUT LORENZO VISDA.
HE'S IRVIN'S FRIEND AND ALSO A CAR RACER.
YEAH... I REMEMBER.
"PETRONAS MOTORSPORT CHAMPION"

WHY? WHAT HAPPENED?
HE WAS SHOT DEAD IN THE STREET.
DOES HE HAVE ENEMIES?
NONE. THEY SAID THAT HE WAS REALLY KIND AND VERY SOCIABLE.
IN THE INITIAL INVESTIGATION, IT TURNS OUT TO BE JUST SOME CASE OF ROAD RAGE.
BIN NEWS
LET'S HOPE THAT THERE'S CCTV ON THE AREA.
10

THE PROBLEM IS THERE ISN'T ONE. AND THERE'S ALSO NO WITNESSES.
HOW'S IRVIN DOING?
SHAKE
HE'S TALKING IT HARD. LORENZO'S DEATH REALLY AFFECTED HIM.

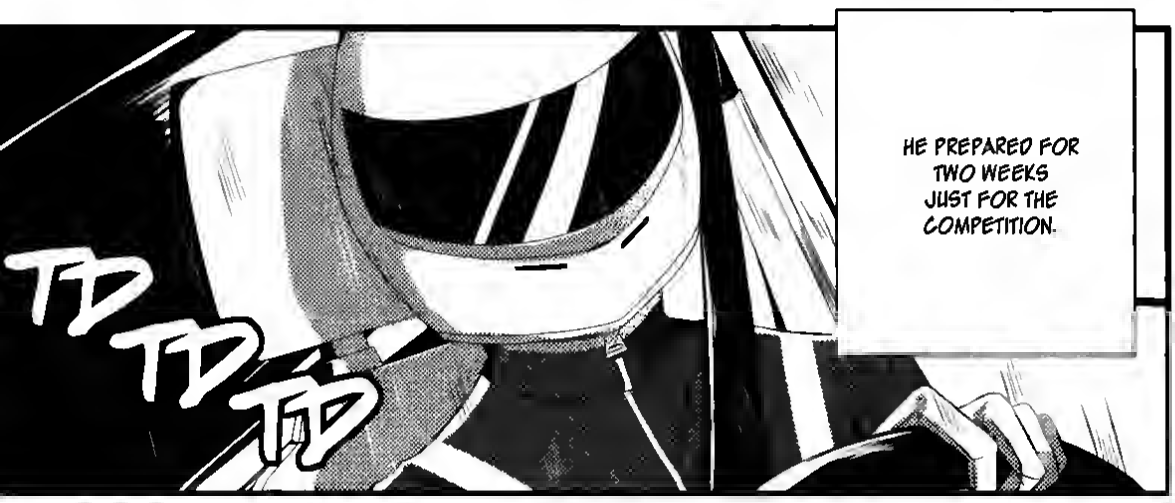
CLENCH

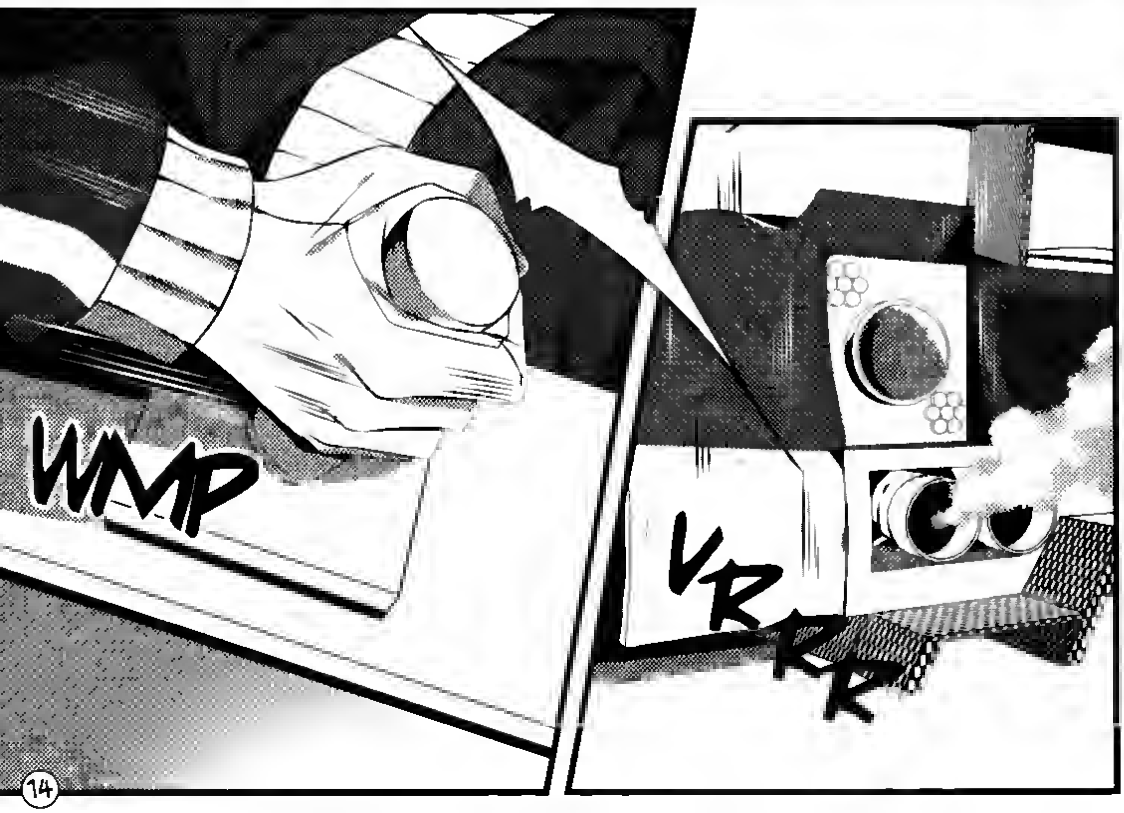
TAP



LORY, WE SHOULD HEAD OUT NOW.

LORY SAID THAT IRVIN IS FOCUSING ON HIS CAR RACING JUST TO FORGET THE LOSS OF HIS FRIEND LORENZO.
DR
RRR
GT


HE PREPARED FOR TWO WEEKS JUST FOR THE COMPETITION.
TD TD TD

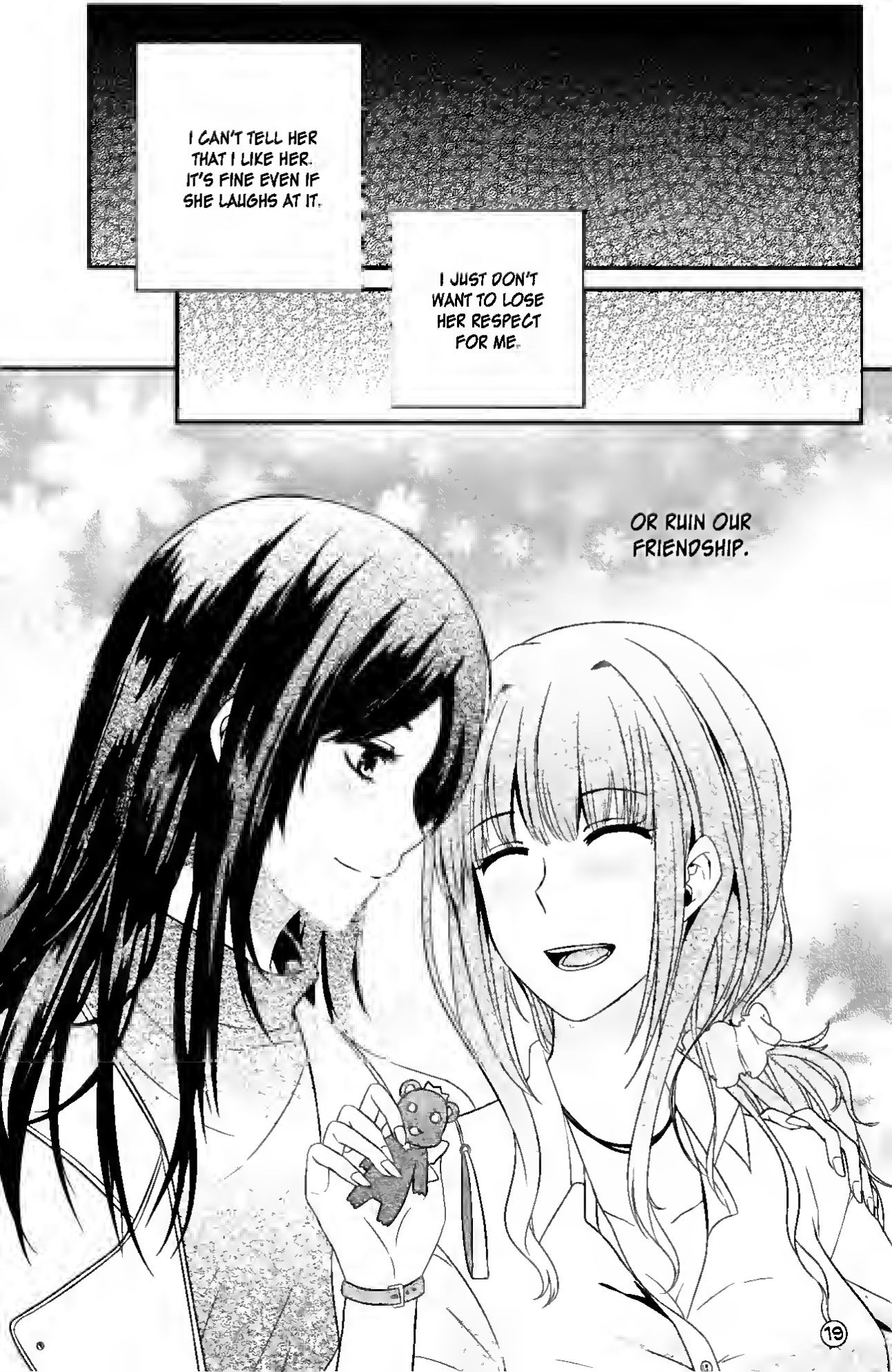

WMP
VRRR

YES! HAHA! HE WON!
BUT EVEN IF EVERYTHING LOOKS NORMAL, I CAN'T REMOVE THE BAD FEELING I HAVE WHEN I SEE IRVIN AND LORY TOGETHER.

...
AH, OKAY...
SURE...
NO PROBLEM.
IRVIN
Call Ended
0:0:45
BEEP
STAND
IRVIN SAID THAT
HE HAS SOMETHING
IMPORTANT TO ATTEND TO,
SO WE SHOULD
GO AHEAD.
16

LORY, ARE YOU AND IRVIN DATING ALREADY?
HUH? I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF HE'S COURTING ME OR WHAT.
YOU'RE OKAY WITH GOING OUT AND CALLING HIM... ACTUALLY, YOU'RE PRETTY SWEET TO HIM.
SO IT MEANS... YOU LIKE HIM?
HE HELPED ME MANY TIMES IN CLOSING A DEAL WITH MY CLIENTS. HE'S A NICE GUY, AI.
WHETHER HE COURTS ME OR NOT, I LIKE HIM AS A PERSON.

DRIP
DRIP
A SECRET...
SOMETIMES, IT'S DIFFICULT TO HIDE.
SIGH
IT'S NOT JUST MY BEING A SECRET AGENT THAT I HAVE TO HIDE FROM LORY...
BUT ALSO WHAT I REALLY FEEL FOR HER.


I CAN'T TELL HER THAT I LIKE HER. IT'S FINE EVEN IF SHE LAUGHS AT IT.
I JUST DON'T WANT TO LOSE HER RESPECT FOR ME.
OR RUIN OUR FRIENDSHIP.

THEY GAVE US LORENZO VIZDA'S CASE, AIRA.
COULD YOU GIVE PARTICULAR DETAILS?

THIS LOOKS LIKE IT'S CONNECTED TO POLITICS, THE MILITARY, AND EVEN THE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES...
BUT I CAN ONLY TELL YOU A LITTLE, AIRA.

THEY DON'T BELIEVE THAT WHAT HAPPENED TO LORENZO IS JUST SOME ROAD RAGE.
THAT'S WHY WE OPENED HIS EMAIL ACCOUNT TO GET SOME LEAD.
BASED ON ONE OF LORENZO AND IRVIN'S EMAIL CONVERSATION, IT SEEMS THAT HE IS RELATED TO A CARNAPPING SYNDICATE.
IS IRVIN ALSO INVOLVED?
APPARENTLY NOT. BUT HE KNOWS THAT LORENZO IS A MEMBER.
WATCH IRVIN CLOSELY, AIRA.
I HAVE THIS STRONG FEELING THAT WE COULD TRACK DOWN AND CATCH THIS SYNDICATE GROUP BECAUSE OF HIM.

TMP
CREAK
TP
TP
TP

WAVE
CURR
ZZT
GET OUT OF THE CAR OR I'LL SHOOT YOU!
BOSS, IS THERE A PROBLEM?
CHK

DID I DO SOMETHING AGAINST YOU?!
BLAST
TP
TP
TP
FWP
THUD

RRR
VRRR—
THAT'S MY CAR...
WRRRR

DRR
R
SMIRK

WRRR
CRR
FFF
GUP

VRR
VRR
VRR
EEE EE
EE
EE
EE
SHOOSH

THG
THG
THG
VROOM
CLUTCH
THG
THG
THG
RRRR
STOP
WISH
BEEP

HF
TSK!
I LOST HIM.
AT LEAST, WE NOW KNOW THAT IRVIN IS ALSO INVOLVED IN A CARNAPPING SYNDICATE.
BUT IT MAY NOT YET HAVE AN IMPACT IN THE CASE BECAUSE IT'S ONLY YOUR WORD THAT WE HAVE. JUST KEEP AN EYE ON HIM, AIRA.
WE JUST NEED TO FIND SOLID EVIDENCE.
BESIDES, IT'S BETTER IF WE COULD PIN-DOWN THE WHOLE SYNDICATE, NOT JUST IRVIN.

AIRA, GREAT TIMING.
I JUST COOKED. I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T EATEN YET.

DID YOU AND IRVIN SEE EACH OTHER TODAY?
HA? NO... WHY?
IT'S NOTHING.
ARE YOU JEALOUS?
PTOO
NO... I DON'T LIKE HIM.

HMM...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HIM, AIRA. HE ALREADY TOLD ME HOW HE FEELS ABOUT ME. AND HE WILL NOT PURSUE ME.
HE JUST LIKES MY COMPANY. HE SAID THAT I RESEMBLE HIS SISTER LIVING IN CANADA.
WHY? DO YOU LOOK LIKE HER?
HE TOLD ME WE LOOK AND ACT SIMILARLY AND HE MISSES HER LESS WHENEVER HE'S WITH ME.
So, would you like to date him, Aira?
I REALLY DON'T LIKE HIM LIKE THAT!
OKAY.

CREAK
TMP
TMP
TMP

CRK

CLICK
COME ON, GET IN.

WHY DID YOU AGREE TO TAKE HIS PLACE ANYWAY?
YOU'RE COOL IRVIN, THAT'S WHY I HOPE YOU DON'T GET TO BE LIKE LORENZO.
IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE MONEY. I ALSO ENJOY THE THRILL.
LET ME GET YOU SOMETHING TO DRINK.
FWIP
TAP
I'LL COME WITH YOU.

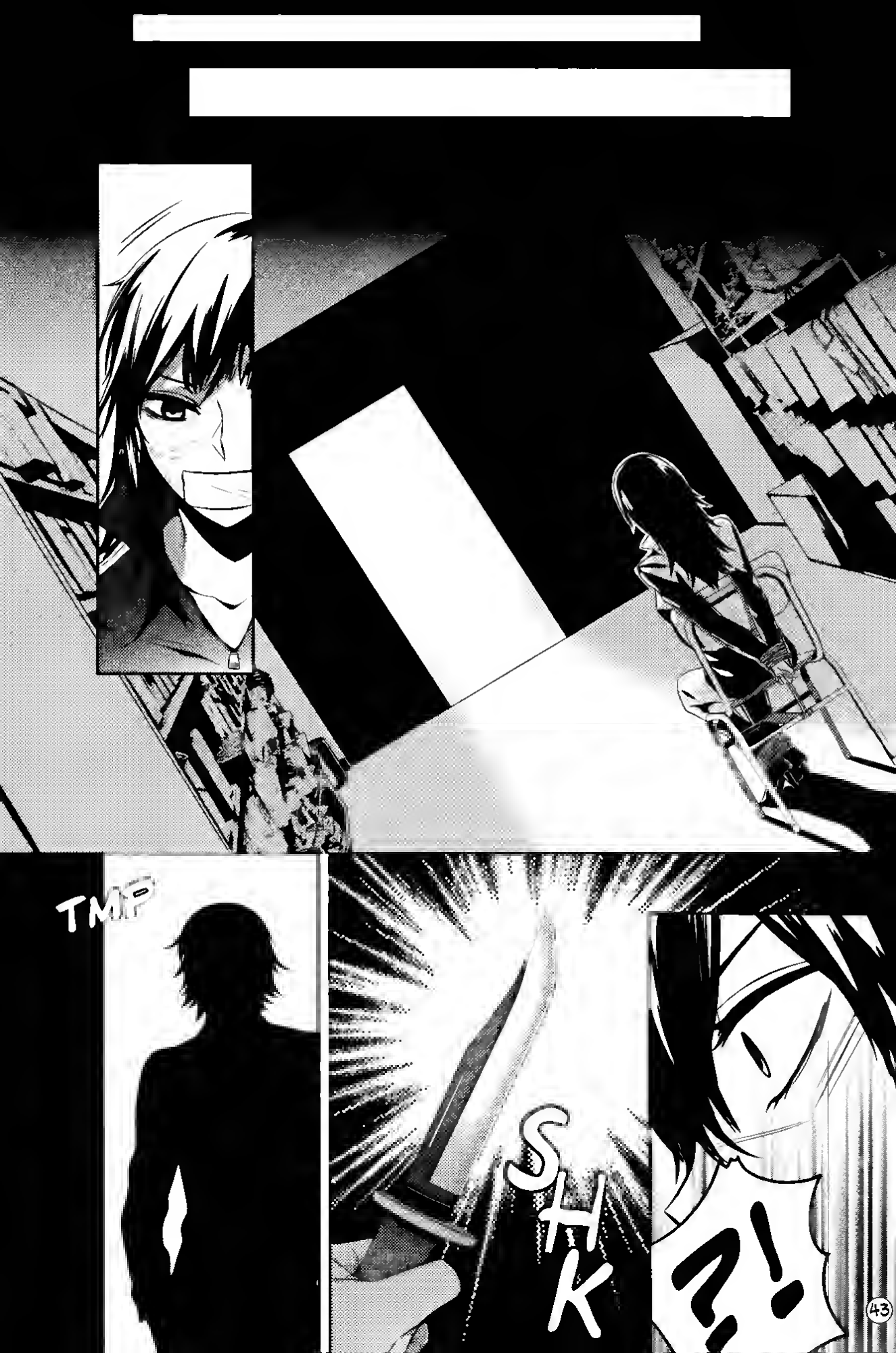
MEOW!
!

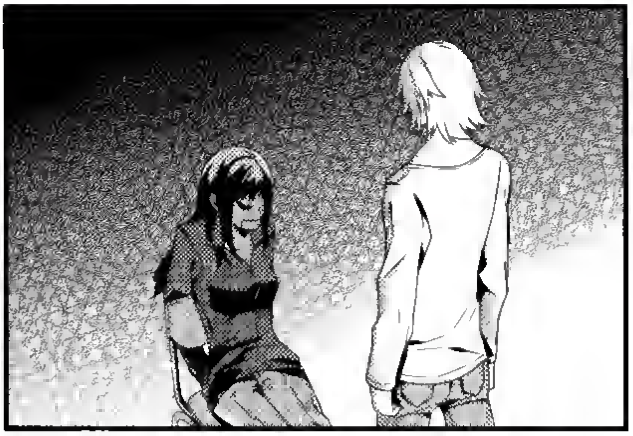
MEOW!
MEOW!
TMP
WSH
HEY!!!
FUNCH

TMP
TMP
BAM
DASH
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP

THUD
POW
BAM

THUD
THWACK


TMP
SHK
?!



SLASH

SKRR

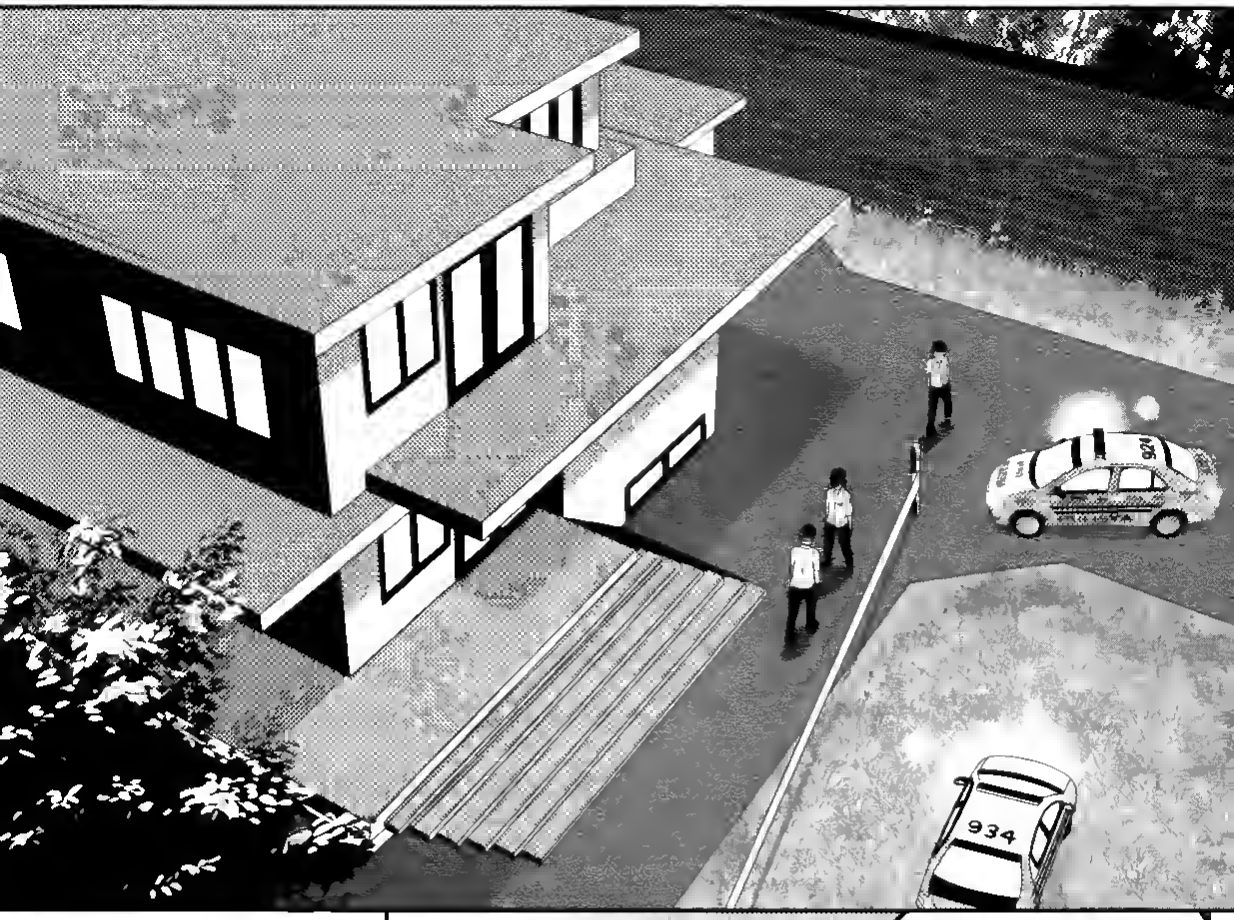
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
DO YOU KNOW THAT THEY'RE PLANNING ON KILLING YOU?!
THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE TO ESCAPE NOW!
YOU HEARD WHAT HAPPENED TO LORENZO, RIGHT?
I DON'T TRUST YOU.

IF YOU'RE THINKING HE DIED BECAUSE OF ROAD RAGE, YOU'RE RONG, AIRA.
I DON'T BELIEVE IN THE POLICE INITIAL REPORT.
SURE, LORENZO WAS A MEMBER OF THE SYNDICATE BUT HE WANTED TO QUIT.
I ONLY JOINED THEM SO THAT I COULD GET EVIDENCE TO BRING THIS SYNDICATE DOWN.
SO THAT'S WHY YOU WERE SO EAGER TO JOIN US.
FLASH

DON'T BE LIKE LORENZO, I TOLD YOU, DIDN'T I?
KA-CHAK
PLEASE LET ME GO! I KNOW NOTHING! I'M NOT INVOLVED IN THIS!
DASH
HEH~

!!!
GRIP
WUP
48

SH
GRAB
CRR
AK
LOOKS LIKE I COULD TRUST YOU.
PLOP


934

THE POLICE ARE NOW ANALYZING IF JECK'S BULLETS MATCH THE ONE FOUND IN LORENZO'S BODY.

THAT'S NOT ENOUGH...
SURE, THEY'LL GO TO PRISON BUT THEY'LL ONLY BE CHARGED WITH CARNAPPING. IT'LL BE A LONG PROCESS BEFORE WE COULD FIND OUT WHO REALLY KILLED LORENZO. AM I RIGHT?
YEAH, BUT...
THERE'S A BIG CHANCE THAT THEY WILL INVOLVE YOU IN THEIR CAR-NAPPING CASE.

I KNOW THAT, AIRA.

IS THAT SO... THEN, THE POLICE WILL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU NOW.

AIRA, I NEED TO TELL YOU SOMETHING..
IF YOU'RE GOING TO THANK ME—
TMP
TMP
TMP
SHE'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
I CALLED LORY EARLIER. I TOLD HER WHAT HAPPENED AND THAT YOU'RE HERE. IN FACT...
AIRA!
BAM
HAHA... I GUESS I WAS WRONG.

DID YOU LIE TO ME?! ANSWER ME!!!
WHY ARE YOU HERE IN HIS HOUSE?
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T GO HOME BECAUSE YOU WENT TO VISIT YOUR PROVINCE.
Bye!
IT'S KINDA HARD TO ANSWER SINCE YOU BOMBARDED ME WITH SO MANY QUESTIONS.
SNAP
FWSH
FLINCH

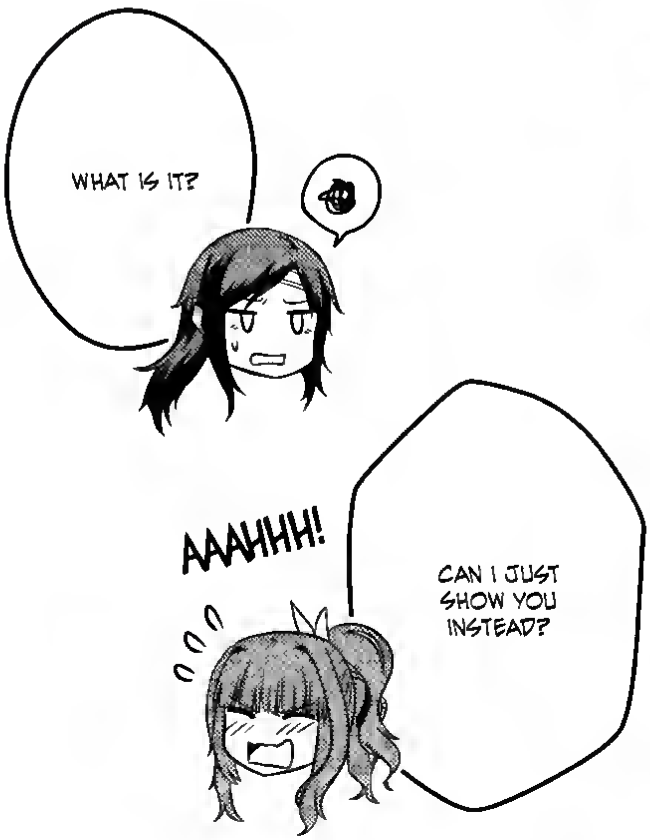
I WAS WORRIED SICK AFTER IRVIN TOLD ME THEY POINTED THEIR GUN AT YOU.
THEN, I WAS SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT YOU WERE THE ONE WHO DARED TO ATTACK THOSE GUNMEN.

WHY DOES IT FEELS LIKE YOU HAVE TOO MANY SECRETS THAT YOU'RE KEEPING FROM ME.
FWIP
HOW ABOUT YOU... ARE YOU ALSO KEEPING SOME-THING FROM ME?

ALRIGHT, I'M GONNA TELL YOU MY BIGGEST SECRET.
IN EXCHANGE, YOU WILL ALSO TELL ME ONE OF YOUR PRECIOUS SECRET.
OKAY... DEAL.
I'M A SPECIAL AGENT, LORY. I DO SURVEILLANCE AND UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS.
AND MY ASSIGNEMENT WAS TO FOLLOW IRVIN.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO STAY AWAY BECAUSE OF THIS... THAT'S OKAY...
UMMM... EHHH... IT'S KINDA HARD TO TELL...
BLUSH
WOW! REALLY?!
YOUR TURN. WHAT WILL YOU TELL ME?

JUST TELL ME WHAT—


WHAT IS IT?
AAAHHH!
CAN I JUST SHOW YOU INSTEAD?

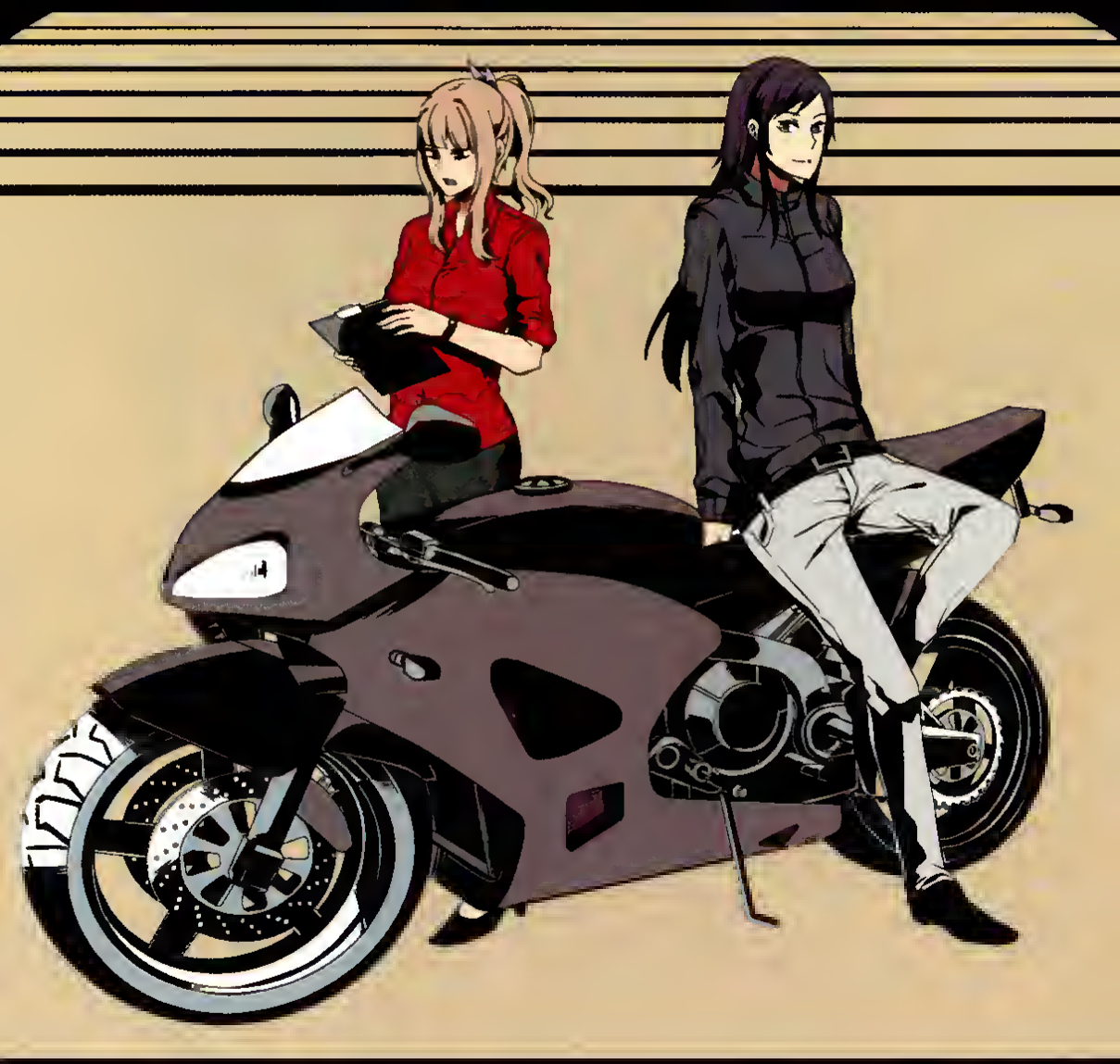
b-thump
b-thump
b-thump
59

WHEN DID YOU...
THE TRUTH IS... I WAS GLAD WHEN IRVIN TOLD ME THAT HE DOESN'T LIKE ME ROMANTICALLY.
I DON'T WANT TO HURT HIS FEELINGS IF EVER HE TOLD ME THAT HE LIKES ME.
AND... I ACTUALLY DON'T HAVE ANY PLAN ON DATING HIM.

I LIKED YOU EVEN BEFORE. THE TRUTH IS, IT'S HARD FOR ME TO FALL FOR ANY MAN.
ESPECIALLY AFTER I MET YOU.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO AVOID ME AFTER THIS...
DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC.
I'M HAPPY THAT YOU TOLD ME.
Hold
'COZ IT'S ALSO ONE OF MY SECRETS.

SEKRETO...
KUNG MINSAN, MAHIRAP NA RIN IYONG ITAGO.
HINDI LANG KASI ANG PAGIGING SPECIAL AGENT KO ANG ITINATAGO KO KAY LORY...
KUNDI PATI ANG NARARAMDAMAN KO PARA SA KANYA.



DRIFT

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